

***Lobstering Is Prohibited  
In The Following Areas:***

- **Artificial Habitats in State Waters NEW!**
- **Biscayne Bay/Card Sound Spiny Lobster Sanctuary** (closed only to the harvest of spiny lobster)
- **Everglades National Park**
- **Dry Tortugas National Park**
- **Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary**  
The following no-take areas are marked by 30" diameter round yellow boundary buoys.
  - Sanctuary Preservation Areas (SPAs)
    - Carysfort Reef
    - Cheeca Rocks
    - Elbow
    - Alligator Reef
    - Key Largo Dry Rocks
    - Coffins Patch
    - Grecian Rocks
    - Sombrero Key
    - French Reef
    - Looe Key
    - Molasses Reef
    - Newfound Harbor
    - Conch Reef
    - Eastern Dry Rocks
    - Hen and Chickens
    - Rock Key
    - Davis Reef
    - Sand Key
  - Special-use Research Only Areas
    - Conch Reef
    - Looe Key Patch Reef
    - Tennessee Reef
    - Eastern Sambo
  - Ecological Reserves
    - Western Sambo
    - Tortugas (not currently marked, refer to GPS coordinates)
- **John Pennekamp Coral Reef State Park**
  - All of John Pennekamp Coral Reef State Park is closed during the two day Sport Lobster Season to the harvest of spiny lobster.
  - During the Regular Lobster Season no person shall harvest any lobster species from or within any coral formation (patch reef).
  - The following “Pennekamp Lobster Exclusion Zones” are closed during the Regular Lobster Season to the harvest of any lobster species and are marked with white and orange information spar buoys:
    - Turtle Rocks
    - Basin Hills North
    - Basin Hills East
    - Basin Hills South
    - Higdon’s Reef
    - Cannon Patch
    - Mosquito Bank North
    - Mosquito Bank South East
    - Three Sisters North
    - Three Sisters South

***Facts For All Seasons:  
What To Know Before You Go. . .***

**Bag Limits:** The federal bag limit cannot be combined with the state bag limit.

**Possession:** Lobster must be of legal size before they are in possession. NOTE: You may not have lobster in your possession in Everglades National Park.

**Egg-bearing (berried)** spiny lobster and ridged slipper lobster (also commonly known as shovelnose or bulldozer lobster) must be released unharmed. Stripping eggbearing females of eggs, and possession of spiny or ridged slipper lobster tails from which eggs have been removed is prohibited. Eggs are an orange, yellow, brown, or red mass found covering the underside of the lobster’s tail.

**Gear** such as spears, hooks, wire snares, and any device which could puncture, penetrate, or crush the shell of the lobster is prohibited.

**“Bully-netting”** is defined as using a circular frame attached at a right angle to the end of a pole and supporting a conical bag of webbing. Possession of bully nets is prohibited in Everglades National Park.

**“Hoop-netting”** is defined as using a frame, circular or otherwise, supporting a shallow bag of webbing and suspended by a line and bridles. Possession of hoop nets is prohibited in Everglades National Park.

**“Artificial Habitat”** is defined as material (e.g. wood, metal, concrete, plastic) that has been placed to provide cover and habitat for spiny lobster. Does not include fishing gear allowed by the Commission or Florida-DEP or Army Corps permitted artificial reefs (e.g. Duane, Eagle, Thunderbolt). NEW!

**License Requirements:** Recreational harvesters are required to possess a valid Florida Saltwater Fishing License with a current crawfish endorsement. Consult your license agent for exemptions to licensing requirements.

**Spanish and slipper lobster** are closed year round to harvest in Key Largo and Looe Key Existing Management Areas, Everglades National Park, Dry Tortugas National Park, Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary Ecological Reserves, Sanctuary Preservation Areas and Special-use Research Only Areas. During the Regular Lobster Season, they are closed to harvest in John Pennekamp Coral Reef State Park Lobster Exclusion Zones and from or within coral formations (patch reefs) within the Park.

**Commercial Lobster Traps:** It is a felony to molest, damage, or take lobster from traps in state or federal waters.

**Dive Flag:** In state and federal waters, all divers and snorkelers in the water are required to post a diver down flag.

**Coral is protected** from damage and taking in state and federal waters.

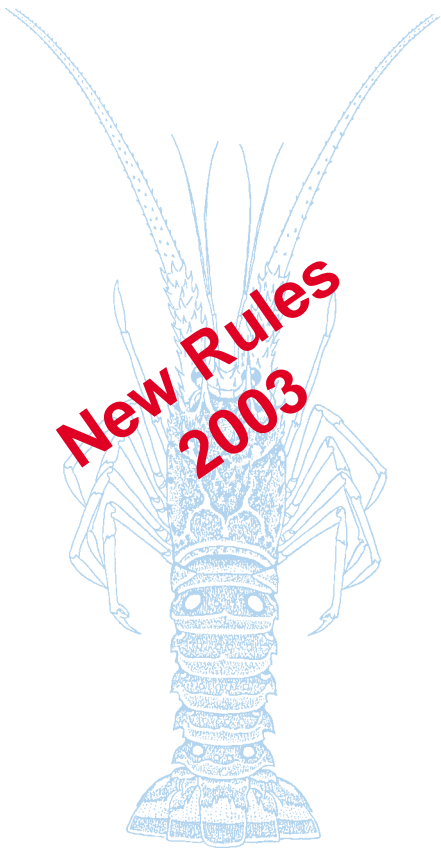
*This is not an official publication of  
lobster season rules and regulations.  
For more information:*

- Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission**  
Division of Law Enforcement (888) 404-3922  
Marathon Office (305) 289-2320  
Division of Marine Fisheries (850) 487-0554
- NOAA National Marine Fisheries Service**  
(727) 570-5326  
(305) 743-3110
- John Pennekamp Coral Reef State Park**  
(305) 451-1202
- Everglades National Park** (305) 242-7700  
24-hour Dispatch (305) 242-7740
- Florida Keys National Wildlife Refuges**  
(305) 872-2239
- Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary**  
Upper Keys Office (305) 852-7717  
Marathon Office (305) 743-2437  
Lower Keys Office (305) 292-0311
- Islamorada, Village of Islands**  
(305) 664-2345

**Visit these Websites!**  
[www.floridakeys.noaa.gov](http://www.floridakeys.noaa.gov)  
[www.nmfs.noaa.gov/](http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/)  
[www.dep.state.fl.us/](http://www.dep.state.fl.us/)  
[www.myflorida.com/](http://www.myflorida.com/)  
[www.nps.gov/ever/](http://www.nps.gov/ever/)  
[www.nps.gov/drto/](http://www.nps.gov/drto/)  
[www.floridaconservation.org](http://www.floridaconservation.org)  
[www.fws.gov/](http://www.fws.gov/)



**Regulations for  
Recreational Harvest  
and  
Lobster Information  
For  
Monroe County,  
Florida**



Florida Spiny Lobster (Crawfish)  
*Panulirus argus*

## Sport Season

### State and Federal Waters

The two day Sport Lobster Season is always the last consecutive Wednesday and Thursday in July.

**Begins** at 12:01 a.m. on the last Wednesday in July.  
**Ends** at 12:00 midnight on the last Thursday in July.

**Bag Limit:** Six (6) per recreational harvester per day. The two day total of twelve lobster per recreational harvester in Monroe County, adjacent Federal waters, and *Biscayne National Park* can only be possessed when transporting your catch by car on, or after, the second day. **NEW!**

**Diving at night** for lobster is NOT permitted in Monroe County and adjacent Federal waters. Bully-netting and hoop-netting is permitted at night. “Night” is 1 hour after official sunset to 1 hour before official sunrise.

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  - Special-use Research Only Areas
  - Ecological Reserves (Tortugas E.R. not currently marked, refer to GPS coordinates)
- **John Pennekamp Coral Reef State Park**
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**Islamorada, Village of Islands** **NEW!**  
Mile Marker 90.9 to Mile Marker 72.6  
During the two day Lobster Sport Season no diving or snorkeling within:

- 300 feet of residential or commercial shoreline
- any manmade or private canal
- any public or private marina
- any public or private basin

## Regular Season

The Regular Lobster Season is always August 6 through March 31.

**Begins** at 12:01 a.m. on August 6.  
**Ends** at 12:00 midnight on March 31.

### State Waters

**NEW!**

**Bag Limit:** Six (6) per recreational harvester per day

**Boundary:** All waters surrounding the Florida Keys out to three (3) miles on the Atlantic side and out to nine (9) miles on the Gulf side are state waters. See NOAA chart for official boundary.

**Diving at night** for lobster is permitted in state waters.

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    - Higdon’s Reef
    - Cannon Patch
    - Mosquito Bank North
    - Mosquito Bank South East
    - Three Sisters North
    - Three Sisters South

### Federal Waters

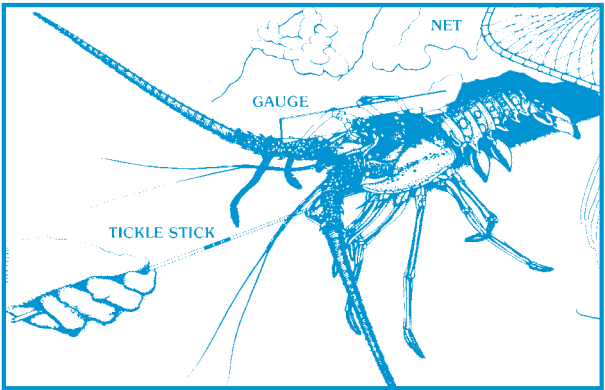
**Bag Limit:** Six (6) per recreational harvester per day.

**Boundary:** Federal waters begin from the most seaward point of land (such as islands) at three (3) miles on the Atlantic side and nine (9) miles on the Gulf side. See NOAA chart for official boundary.

**Diving at night** for lobster is permitted in federal waters.

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## Measuring Lobster

- ✓ Each harvester must have a gauge made for measuring lobster while harvesting in the water.
- ✓ All lobster must be measured in the water and released unharmed if undersized.
- ✓ Lobster carapace must be greater than three (3) inches.
- ✓ All recreationally harvested lobster must remain in whole condition while at sea.
- ✓ Tails can only be separated on land. When the tail is separated from the body, it must be greater than 5 1/2 inches.

